The Power of

INFORMATION

A c c e s s   S h a r e   C o l l a b o r a t e

Where it's needed, When it's needed, To those who need it most

Defense transformation hinges on the recognition that information is our greatest source of power. Information can be leveraged to allow decision makers at all levels to make **better decisions faster** and **act sooner**. Ensuring timely and trusted information is available where it is needed, when it is needed, and to those who need it most is at the heart of the capability needed to **conduct Network-Centric Operations (NCO).**

Becoming Net Centric requires people, processes, and technology to work together to enable timely:

- **access** to information,
- **sharing** of information, and
- **collaboration** among those involved.

Instead of "pushing information out" based on individually engineered and predetermined interfaces, Net-Centricity ensures that a user at any level can both "take what he needs" and "contribute what he knows."

The **Net-Centric Data Strategy** meets this challenge by focusing on data, rather than on the proprietary applications and programs that manipulate it (the current focus). Those at the source of the data will be required to make it easy to find and use. It must be:

- **visible,**
- **accessible,** and
- **understandable**.

Communities of Interest (COI) are collaborative groups of users who must have a shared vocabulary to exchange information. Data characteristics and content will be **"tagged"** in an agreed-to manner. The communities will range from pre-established groups with ongoing arrangements, to **Unanticipated Users** and non-traditional partnerships that develop on an ad hoc basis. Individual users will determine and display content based on their specific needs**, User Defined Operating Pictures (UDOPs**), rather than in rigid or pre-determined formats.

Information Assurance, the greatest Enterprise challenge, is the basis for **trust**: trust in the system's availability, the participants' identities, and the data's dependability and integrity. Today firewalls and software patches attempt to keep intruders out and data safe. Tomorrow's assured information will require that the individual data be secured throughout its useful lifespan.

The **Global Information Grid (GIG)** will enable Network-Centric Operations and collects, processes, stores and manages the Enterprise data. The GIG is not just a technological backbone. It includes:

- **people**,
- **process**, and
- **technology**.

The GIG enables **"information on demand."**

The **DoD Chief Information Officer (CIO)** provides the leadership to meet the Net-Centric vision and ultimately deliver the critical enabling capabilities required by the National Defense Strategy. Transforming to a Network-Centric Force requires fundamental changes in process, policy, and culture across the Department (defense operations, intelligence functions, and business processes).

The technological change will be significant, but the **cultural shift** may be even more challenging. The hallmark of the 21st century is **uncertainty**. Net-Centricity is rooted in a simple principle: ***Confront uncertainty with agility***. To be agile, data can no longer be "owned"; it must be shared.

Timely and dependable information will be available across the Enterprise: from higher level headquarters and command centers, to a soldier in the city tracking insurgents, or a civilian in need of a new supplier. Ultimately, Net-Centricity means **Power to the Edge**.